

Liberal Party of Canada  
81 Metcalfe Street, Suite 400  
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6M8

September 14, 2008

Wayne Grady  
Chair  
The Writers' Union of Canada  
90 Richmond Street East, Suite 200  
Toronto, Ontario M5C 1P1

Dear Mr. Grady,

Enclosed, please find the Liberal Party response to your questionnaire.

For more information on the Liberal Party of Canada's vision for Canada, please take a moment to review our platform online at [www.liberal.ca](http://www.liberal.ca). This document provides details on Liberal goals and priorities.

On behalf of our Leader, Stéphane Dion, and the entire Liberal team, thank you for writing to identify the major concerns of your membership. We appreciate your interest in the Liberal Party's policies as they relate to the issues which affect you.

Sincerely,

Doug Ferguson, President  
Liberal Party of Canada



## **A Liberal Response to the Writers' Union of Canada**

- 1. Does your Party acknowledge that the federal government has a responsibility to invest in art and culture in Canada as it does for other sectors of national activity?**

Government has a very important role to play in supporting arts and culture, both by investing in cultural activities and stimulating creativity, as well as by fostering an environment that will allow this creativity to express itself freely.

- 2. Does your party agree that artists, intellectuals and cultural institutions contribute as much to the international image of Canada as athletes and business people?**

Artists are some of Canada's best ambassadors. That is why the government must support them and continue funding programs that help our artists disseminate their products and showcase their creations.

Artists who showcase their creations abroad bolster Canada's image and represent our values to the world in a very positive way. Artists also have a huge impact on the tourism industry in Canada. Trusting our artists and allowing our cultural institutions to represent Canada in foreign countries markets our country's image in a very positive way and attracts visitors from around the world.

- 3. If so, what programs and policies will your Party put in place to ensure that artists, creators and intellectuals participate in Canadian foreign policy strategy?**

The Liberal Party will reverse the cuts to the Trade Routes program and to the Promart program which allow our artists to perform abroad, disseminate Canada's culture in foreign countries and enhance our country's reputation around the world.

We have already committed to restoring international promotion of Canadian arts and culture through the Public Diplomacy Program (PDP), an investment of \$11.8 million which was cut by the Conservatives in 2006. As well, the Liberal Party would increase the funding for international arts touring and promotion by \$11 million over 3 years.

- 4. Does your party intend to replace the programs dedicated to the internationalization of Canadian culture (PromArt and TradeRoutes)? Please provide specific details.**

As mentioned above the Liberal Party intends to reverse the Conservative government's cuts to Promart and Trade Routes and restore these programs completely.

**5. What does your Party plan to do to stimulate and sustain the creative economy in Canada?**

Liberals understand the real value of culture. Our cultural institutions are paramount to our identity, and play an equally important role in our country's prosperity.

A recent study published by the Conference Board of Canada demonstrates cultures crucial role in Canada's growth and job creation. This is something the Liberal Party wants to build on and invest in.

There is a major spill over of culture into other areas of job creation, such as tourism, small business expansion, and even attracting and retaining a skilled workforce – areas which can be improved by investing in culture.

**6. Is your Party prepared to address the socio-economic needs of self-employed workers in the creative economy by finding ways to make the social safety net available to them?**

A large proportion of Canadian artists and cultural workers are self-employed professionals or independent contractors. Issues such as health care, employment insurance, pension entitlements, tax treatment, access to professional development or training, are important to them. The Liberal party recognizes this and has invested billions in the arts, the culture and toward Canadian artists. A Liberal government would continue to invest heavily in the preservation of Canadian arts and culture.

Also Liberal Party intends to ensure that funding provided by the Department of Canadian Heritage in support of Canadian artists reaches sufficient levels to help artists thrive.

In terms of taxation, the Liberal government recognizes that reduced taxes help ease the financial burden artists, particularly those living on low-incomes. That is why previous liberal governments consistently implemented policies to reduce taxation, positively affecting individuals making less than \$35,000 annually. This helps keep more money in the pockets of the Canadians who need it the most, including our artists and cultural leaders.

**7. New technology is affecting creators' rights in ways that deprive creators of compensation for use of their works. Is your party considering copyright law policies that will modernize our legislation and ensure that technology does not have a negative impact on creators' ability to earn a living?**

The Liberal Party understands that copyright reform is needed to reflect rapid changes in technology and ensure these changes not have a negative impact on creators' ability to earn a living.

When parliament resumes, a Liberal government will ensure thorough study and consultations are undertaken to ensure the needs of creators are addressed. This means making sure artists receive proper compensation for use of their work.

**8. Does your Party support the Quebec policy of exempting a portion income from copyright sources from taxation as incentive for greater innovation and productivity and would you introduce a similar measure at the federal level?**

The Liberal Party is always open to consider new ways to improve innovation and productivity in the sphere of arts and culture. As for copyright-income deduction which has been effective in the province of Québec – a province with a significantly different legal framework than the rest of Canada – we have not yet put forward such a plan.